

West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at
19:00 On Thursday 20th November 2025
at St Mary's Church Meeting Room, West Rainton

Present: Councillors S Corfield, I Diggory (Chairperson), A Langford, K Wood and A Wallage.

In Attendance:

Parish Clerk
County Councillor Alan Bell
County Councillor Phil Heaviside
Margaret Scott – Co-option Candidate
2 x Members of the public

NOTE: The meeting was not audio or video recorded.

1. Apologies for Absence

An apology had been received from Cllr Stabler who had another commitment.

Parish Council resolved to approve this absence.

2. Declarations of interest

It was agreed that declarations of interest would be dealt with as and when the need arose.

3. Parish Councillor Vacancies

a) Co-option to Parish Councillor vacancies

Cllr Diggory introduced Margaret Scott who was a candidate for co-option. Parish Council members introduced themselves. Margaret presented to members her rationale for wanting to become a Parish Councillor and what she felt that she would bring to the role. Margaret left the room while Parish Councillors considered the application.

Parish Council resolved to co-opt Margaret to the Parish Council.

Margaret signed the acceptance of office statement and this was witnessed by the Parish Clerk.

b) Deadline for applications for vacancies

Parish Council resolved to approve the 10th February 2026 as the deadline for co-option applications for the remaining two vacancies.

4. Public Participation

The two members of the public in attendance raised the issue of road safety in the Moorsley Crossing area. There have been numerous accidents and issues around speeding in the area.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

Cllr Diggory advised that these issues had been raised by Cllr Stabler and were a part of a number of road safety concerns that were being considered by the Parish Council.

5. Daniel Raitt – Registered Manager, The Cambian Group

Daniel Raitt did not attend.

6. Minutes of Previous Meeting

a) Approval of Minutes

The Parish Clerk advised members that he had been presented with a number of comments from Cllr Stabler. Unfortunately Cllr Stabler was not in attendance and therefore unable to discuss the feedback.

Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16th October 2025 be approved as a correct record.

b) Review of Actions

Cllr Diggory advised members that the objection to the Premises Licence Application had been submitted and that the hearing had been delayed due to the applicants circumstances.

Cllr Diggory advised members that he had attended the CDALC Annual General Meeting.

The Parish Clerk advised that the sign for the Cemetery had been delivered and was awaiting installation.

7. County Councillor Report

Cllr Heaviside advised that he had put some additional poppies up on the lamp posts throughout the Village and the Parish was to keep them moving forward.

He went on to ask if members were aware of any white lines that needed refreshing in the Village and if they were to let him know as some work was to be carried out.

Cllr Wallage advised that there is missing glass in the bus shelter in School Avenue. Cllr Heaviside agreed to chase this up with DCC.

Cllr Bell advised members that £3000 from the neighbourhood budget was being made available to the Village Partnership.

A parishioner had contacted Cllr Bell regarding parking on yellow line near the Chemist and he advised that he had passed the information on to parking enforcement.

Cllr Bell had received feedback regarding mud on the roads from the Banks development. The enforcement team had been out to discuss the issue and Banks agreed to wash the wagon wheels prior to leaving the site.

Cllr Bell raised the longstanding issue of car parking at the Surgery. The situation is not good and the Surgery are looking for alternative quotations for developing the car park after receiving one from DCC.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

8. Finance Report

WEST RANTON & LEAMSIDE PARISH COUNCIL - FINANCE REPORT					
ITEM:	8				
DATE:	20/11/2025				
PART A:	FOR INFORMATION				
1. INCOME		Memorial Leaf BACS L Morris	£180.00		
		Replacement Memorial (Scotts)	£40.00		
2. EXPENDITURE					
A) Expenditure previously agreed by Parish Council due this month					
ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	Payment Method	AMOUNT (£)	
1	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk Net Salary - November	BACS	513.75	
2	HM Revenue and Customs Only 465PD00171320	HMRC Liability - November	BACS	128.40	
3	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk Net Salary - December	BACS	513.75	
4	HM Revenue and Customs Only 465PD00171320	HMRC Liability - December	BACS	128.40	
5	Makepeace Landscapes	Cemetery Maintenance and Village strimming	BACS	708.00	
6	Durham County Council	Installation and fixing of 3 benches, tree seat and 2 x litter bins	Direct Debit	2640.00	
7	Unity Bank	Service Charge	Direct Debit	6.00	
8	Lloyds Bank	Service Charge (Debit Card)	Direct Debit	3.00	
9	EON	Electricity Supply	Direct Debit	16.87	
		TOTAL		£4,658.17	
B) Expenditure requiring approval					
ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	Payment Method	AMOUNT (£)	BUDGET PROVISION
11	Lloyds Bank	Recharge: Poppy wreath (Royal British Legion) £24.49	Debit Card	24.49	Y
12	Lloyds Bank	Recharge: Wickes compost x 9 for planters	Debit Card	60.00	Y
13	Lloyds Bank	Recharge: Set of HP Ink Cartridges	Debit Card	136.55	Y
14	Lloyds Bank	Recharge: XL Black HP Ink Cartridge	Debit Card	54.76	Y
15	Lloyds Bank	Cemetery Signage	Debit Card	25.04	Y
16	Mr G Coates	Village Maintenance	BACS	250.00	Y
17	Great Lumley Parish Council	Box of 20 Post Poppies	BACS	70.80	Y
18	The Gilpin Press	A3 printing for Christmas Carols Event	BACS	68.60	Y
19	Mr M Ramshaw	Reimbursement for additional winter bedding plants	BACS	82.29	Y
20	Pittington Brass Band	Donation for Christmas performance	BACS	150.00	Y
		TOTAL		£922.53	
Total Expenditure A + B				£5,580.70	

Parish Council resolved to:

1. Note income and expenditure reported for information.
2. Approve expenditure listed in Part B

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

9. Planning Applications

Two planning applications were considered from the DCC weekly planning application lists.

There was no comment on the first which was regarding a fence installation.

The second application was regarding the proposed development of Jubilee Hall. Parish Council agreed that they were in support of the development.

10. Definitive Map Modification Order Application

Cllr Diggory gave an update on the application submitted to DCC by the Parish Council some time ago in support of concerns raised by residents.

The Parish Council had been advised that the application was scheduled for consideration by the Highways Committee at its forthcoming November meeting and Cllr Diggory was to attend.

A DCC officer subsequently advised that consideration of the item had to be withdrawn from the November meeting and is now likely to be considered at the December Highways meeting.

11. Jubilee Hall Project

a) Progress Update

Cllr Langford gave a brief update on progress that had been made since the last Parish Council meeting.

b) Request from the Community Association for a supporting letter with regards to the works to be carried out at Jubilee Hall

At this stage, both Cllrs Langford and Wood declared an interest in the item due to them being members of the Community Association. They left the room whilst Parish Council considered the item.

Parish Council considered the request for support. Parish Council agreed it would be beneficial to support the Project. **Parish Council resolved** to approve that Cllr Diggory writes a letter of support on behalf of the Parish Council which is given to the Chair of the Community Association.

Cllrs Langford and Wood returned to the Meeting. A discussion took place around dispensations for the future and the Parish Clerk agreed to look into the procedure.

12. Annual Plan

Cllr Wallage gave members a history of the Annual Plan and how it was developed after a community consultation exercise.

The Plan is in need of review and Cllrs Diggory and Wallage offered to review the Plan and bring it back to a future Parish Council meeting.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

13. Christmas Arrangements

a) Christmas Event

Parish Council noted the time and date of the event (18th December 7.00 pm start).

b) Booking of Jubilee Hall

Parish Council resolved to approve the booking of Jubilee Hall on 18th December for the event between 18.30 and 21.00.

Parish Council considered an appropriate donation for Pittington Brass Band and **resolved** to approve a donation of £150.00.

14. Cemetery

a) Memorial Testing

The Parish Clerk advised members of the need for memorial testing and its importance with regards to Health and Safety responsibilities within the Cemetery, and advised that whilst he had tried to obtain three quotations only one company had come forward with a written quotation.

Parish Council resolved to approve the quotation received from Scotts Memorials.

b) Maintenance of Lime Trees

The Parish Clerk referred members to the quotation received from Special Branch Tree Services regarding the maintenance of lime trees within the Cemetery. Again, the Parish Clerk advised that ensuring the health and safety of individuals using the Cemetery is paramount and the importance of checking such large trees is a key part of the Parish Councils responsibilities.

Parish Council resolved to approve the quotation.

15. Gym/Play Equipment

Cllr Wallage referred members to the report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Parish Council agreed with the idea in principle however felt that it did not want to take on responsibility for the existing land and equipment. Cllr Bell agreed to speak to James Young from DCC to discuss options that are available.

16. Motion – Annual Parish Meetings: Administration/Process (Cllr Stabler)

Item deferred due to the absence of Cllr Stabler.

17. Motion – Asset Register Update (Cllr Stabler)

Item deferred due to the absence of Cllr Stabler.

18. Smaller Councils Forum

Cllr Wallage advised members that the meeting have covered a new requirement Known as Assertion 10 which will be part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for next year.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

Cllr Wallage advised members that there are vacancies on the CDALC Executive Committee and if anyone is interested they should let the Parish Clerk know.

There was also a discussion around code of conduct changes to which there is some opposition currently. CDALC may recommend following the DCC Code of Conduct moving forward.

The meeting also discussed the concerns around the loss of LCTRS.

19. West Rainton and Leamside Village Partnership Meeting

Cllr Diggory gave brief feedback of the meeting held on 19th November 2025

The meeting was chaired by the new chairman Ken Groves.

Much of the meeting was taken up with the treasurer Chris Burns reporting on his fundraising efforts and spending plans. In particular he focused on the plan to create a café in JH along with a refurbishment of the kitchen. The work is scheduled for completion in March 2026. A grant from our County Councillors will be used to pay the cost of room hire for local groups using Jubilee Hall.

More houses in the village mean more copies of Village News need to be printed. Chris reported the Village News made a small loss last year but is seeking further advertising revenue to return to profit.

Kath Whitehouse, who has organized the Village Show for many years, announced that she would be stepping down, as will the organisers of the Village Market when Jubilee Hall is closed for refurbishment next year.

20. General Correspondence

There was no general correspondence for consideration.

21. Date and time of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting is Thursday 15th January 2026 at 19:00.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....